

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1           1.       (Currently Amended) A method of utilizing a collective processing capability of a  
2       plurality of computers after the computers have been sold to purchasers by a vendor, the method  
3       comprising:

4           entering into a plurality of agreements, each of which is between the vendor and a  
5       different one of the purchasers, wherein the agreements specify that the vendor retains a right to  
6       use processing resources of the corresponding computers after the sale of the computers;  
7           conveying, subject to said agreements, the plurality of the computers to said purchasers;  
8       and

9           using, according to the agreements, a network of the plurality of computers to provide a  
10      service that provides the vendor with a commercial benefit, wherein using the network of the  
11      plurality of computers includes employing the retained processing resources of the computers to  
12      perform the service.

1           2.       (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein each one of said plurality  
2       of agreements is entered into prior to the sale of a respective said specific one of the computers.

1           3.       (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein each agreement provides  
2       a purchasing incentive to each of the purchasers.

1           4.       (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein, in response to a query  
2       generated by a first one of the computers and received by a second one of the computers, using  
3       the processing resource of the second one of the computers to send data from the second one of  
4       the computers to the first one of the computers, wherein the processing resource of the second  
5       one of the computers used is the processing resource retained by a corresponding one of the  
6       agreements.

1           5.       (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said data comprises an  
2       Internet web page.

1           6.       (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1,~~ A method of utilizing a collective  
2 processing capability of a plurality of computers after the computers have been sold to  
3 purchasers by a vendor, the method comprising:  
4           entering into a plurality of agreements, each of which is between the vendor and a  
5 different one of the purchasers, wherein the agreements specify that the vendor retains a right to  
6 use processing resources of the corresponding computers after the sale of the computers;  
7           conveying, subject to said agreements, the plurality of the computers to said purchasers;  
8 and  
9           using a network of the plurality of computers to provide a service that provides the  
10 vendor with a commercial benefit,  
11           wherein entering into the plurality of agreements further comprises entering into the  
12 plurality of agreements to retain a right to use storage areas in the respective computers,  
13           wherein the network comprises a plurality of nodes, ~~each of which includes one of~~  
14 including the computers, and wherein one of the nodes is a vendor node, the method further  
15 comprising:  
16           the vendor node maintaining a list of all of the computers connected thereto, along with  
17 [[the ]]respective IP addresses for ~~each of the~~ corresponding computers, and information  
18 identifying files stored ~~on each respective one of the~~ in the respective retained storage areas of  
19 the corresponding computers; and  
20           in response to a query for a requested file, the vendor node accessing the list to identify  
21 one or more of the computers storing the requested file to enable retrieval of the requested file in  
22 response to the query.

1           7.       (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the network comprises a  
2 plurality of peers, each of which includes a corresponding one of the computers, the method  
3 further comprising:  
4           configuring each of the peers in the network as a servent that acts as both a client and a  
5 server to distribute data between the peers in response to a query generated by one of the peers.

1           8.       (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
2           distributing said query between successive said peers until the query is received by one of  
3           the peers having access to said data; and  
4           distributing said data between successive said peers until the data is received by said one  
5           of the peers that generated the query.

1           9.       (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said network includes said  
2           computers used by entities not in privity with the vendor.

1           10.      (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein retaining the right to use  
2           said processing resources comprises retaining the right to use low-priority processor cycles of the  
3           corresponding computers to effect said service.

1           11.      (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein retaining the right to use  
2           said processing resources comprises retaining the right to use a predetermined amount of  
3           processor time within a fixed interval of time in each of the computers to effect said service.

1           12.-13. (Cancelled)

1           14. (Currently Amended) A method of utilizing a collective processing capability of a  
2 plurality of devices containing embedded processors, after the devices have been sold to  
3 purchasers by a vendor, the method comprising:

4           entering into an agreement between the vendor and one of the purchasers wherein, with  
5 respect to a specific one of the devices to be sold to said one of the purchasers, the vendor retains  
6 a right to use a portion of the embedded processor of said specific device after the sale thereof;

7           conveying the specific device to said one of the purchasers, after entering into said  
8 agreement;

9           repeating the previous two steps until a predetermined minimum number of said devices  
10 that are connectable to a network have been sold; and

11          using the network to provide a service, ~~used by the purchasers,~~ that provides the vendor  
12 with a commercial benefit, wherein providing the service includes employing the retained  
13 portions of the embedded processors of the devices in the network.

1           15.-16. (Cancelled)

2           17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein entering into the  
3 agreements further comprises entering into the agreements to retain a right to use storage areas of  
4 the devices, wherein the network comprises a plurality of nodes, ~~each of which includes one of~~  
5 including the devices, and wherein one of the nodes is a vendor node, the method further  
6 comprising:

7           the vendor node maintaining a list of all of the devices connected thereto, along with [(the  
8 )]respective IP addresses for ~~each of the~~ corresponding devices, and information identifying files  
9 ~~accessible by each respective one of the~~ stored in the respective retained storage areas of the  
10 corresponding devices; and

11          in response to a query for a requested file, the vendor node accessing the list to identify  
12 one or more of the devices storing the requested file to enable retrieval of the requested file in  
13 response to the query.

1           18.     (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the network comprises a  
2 plurality of peers, each of which includes one of the devices, the method further comprising:  
3           configuring each of the peers in the network as a servent that acts as both a client and a  
4 server to distribute data between the peers in response to a query generated by one of the peers.

1           19.     (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the right to use a portion  
2 of the embedded processor of said specific one of the devices includes the right to use low-  
3 priority processor cycles of the specific one of the devices to effect said service.

1           20.     (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the right to use a portion  
2 of the embedded processor of said specific one of the devices includes the right to use a  
3 predetermined amount of processor time within a fixed interval of time in the specific one of the  
4 devices to effect said service.

1           21.     (Currently Amended) A method for utilizing a collective processing capability of  
2 a plurality of computers comprising:

3           (a) entering into an agreement between a vendor of said computers and a purchaser of a  
4 corresponding one of the computers, wherein the vendor retains a right to use a processing  
5 resource of the corresponding computer after the sale thereof; and

6           (b) conveying said corresponding one of the computers to said purchaser, after entering  
7 into said agreement;

8           wherein steps (a) and (b) are repeated with a different said purchaser until a number of  
9 the computers that are connectable to a network have been sold; and

10          in response to a request of the vendor or a third party different from the vendor and the  
11 purchasers, performing a service using the retained processing resources of the computers in the  
12 network.

1           22.     (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising using the  
2 network to provide a service by the vendor.

1           23.-25. (Cancelled)

1           26.     (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein entering into the plurality  
2 of agreements further comprises entering into the plurality of agreements to retain a right to use  
3 secure storage areas in the computers to store data of the vendor.

1           27.     (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein retaining the right to use  
2 the secure storage areas comprises retaining the right to use virtual environments in the  
3 computers for storing the vendor data.

1           28.     (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein entering into the plurality  
2 of agreements further comprises entering into the plurality of agreements to run software of the  
3 vendor using the retained processing resources of the computers, the method further comprising:  
4 receiving a request from a requestor for the service, wherein the requestor is the vendor  
5 or a third party different from the vendor and the purchasers; and  
6 running the software on at least one of the computers in response to the request.

29.-32. (Cancelled)

33. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein employing the retained processing resources of the computers is to perform the service in response to a request of the vendor or a third party different from the vendor and the purchasers.

34. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein employing the retained portions of the embedded processors of the devices is to perform the service in response to a request of the vendor or a third party different from the vendor and the purchasers.

35. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the agreements further specify that the vendor has retained a right to use storage areas of the plurality of computers, the method further comprising:

a node associated with the vendor receiving a query for requested data;  
the node responding to the query by accessing information to determine which one or more of the computers in the network contains the requested data in respective one or more retained storage areas; and  
the node providing information to allow retrieval of the requested data.